

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSU KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 747

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 4493

FOR IATF, TAFT FROM MC MANAWAY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS, MY

SUBJ: SPECIAL IATF TEAM VISIT TO MALAYSIA

1. SUMMARY: TEAM ARRIVED KUALA LUMPUR EVENING OF 31 JULY. REFUGEE SITUATION IN MALAYSIA CONSIDERABLY BRIGHTER THAN EXPECTED, BOTH IN TERMS OF HEALTH AND MAGNITUDE OF RESIDUAL POPULATION PROBLEM. TEAM ARRIVED COINCIDENT WITH ARRIVAL AT AIRPORT FROM ISLAND CAMP OF REFUGEES DEPARTING HERE FOR GUAM. THESE REFUGEES IN OBVIOUS GOOD HEALTH AND HIGH SPIRITS. MALAYSIAN AUTHORITIES, ICEM AND IN PARTICULAR MALAYSIAN RED CROSS ALL IN ATTENDANCE AND CLEARLY ACTIVE. CONVERSATION WITH CHAIRMAN MALAYSIAN RED CROSS MOST ENCOURAGING REGARDING CAMP CONDITIONS. REFUGEES SEEN BY TEAM REPORTED AS REPRESENTATIVES BY EMBASSY OFFICIALS AND RED CROSS. TEAM NOW BELIEVES THERE IS NO NEED TO STAGE REFUGEES FROM HERE THROUGH GUAM FOR HEALTH REASONS.

2. MET WITH CHARGE AND STAFF MORNING OF 1 AUGUST FOR USEFUL DISCUSSION. TEAM DID NOT MEET WITH ANY OTHER OFFICIALS. TEAM IS DEPARTING NIGHT OF 1 AUGUST FOR SINGAPORE.

3. REGARDING NUMBERS, BEGINNING TOTAL WAS 988. EMBASSY
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REPORTS THAT AUSTRALIA HAS DECIDED TO TAKE 100, CANADA 50,

AND OTHER THIRD COUNTRIES 57. EMBASSY HAS CLEARED 694 FOR U.S. SYSTEM AND PROJECTS A RESIDUAL OF 74, NONE OF WHOM WILL MEET CURRENT U.S. CRITERIA. AUSTRALIAN POLICY ON THEIR 100 DOES NOT INCLUDE RESTRICTIVE CRITERIA AND CHARGE HOPEFUL OF BEING ABLE TO WORK WITH AUSSIES, FRENCH, CANADIANS AND OTHERS TO MOVE RESIDUAL ONCE EXPANDED AUTHORITY RECEIVED.

4. IN ADDITION TO COOPERATING WITH EMBASSY ON MOVEMENT OF THOSE U.S. TAKING, INCLUDING USE OF HOSPITAL FACILITIES FOR HEALTH EXAMINATIONS, MALAYSIA IS TAKING FOR PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT ALL MOSLEM CAMBODRULNA(CHAMS), BOTH THOSE THAT LANDED HERE AND IN THAILAND. THUS FAR TOTAL IS ABOUT 1200 FOLKS WE WON'T HAVE TO TAKE.

5. UNHCR REP WEAK AND INACTIVE LEAVING OUR INTERNATIONALIZATION EFFORT THAT OF THE RESIDENT

MISSIONS. RECENT AUSTRALIAN AND CANADIAN DECISION HELPFUL BUT FRENCH EFFORT MARGINAL AT BEST. RECOMMEND EATSMXPE SPECIAL REPRESENTATION TO FRENCH RE MALAYSIA PARTICULARLY SINCE WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS THIS ONE LOOKS NEARLY SOLVED.

6. PROGRAM HERE HAS TAKEN SPECIAL EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE EMBASSY. NEW AFFIDAVITS WILL INCREASE THE BURDEN AND INS WILL SEND TDY OFFICIAL NOW IN BANGKOK FROM HONG KONG FOR REFUGEE FLIGHT NOW PLANNED FOR 8 AUGUST. END SUMMARY.

7. GENERAL SITUATION: OF THE TOTAL MIGRATION AROUND THE GULF OF SIAM, MALAYSIA RECEIVED 988 REFUGEES WHO WERE INTERNED ON THE ISLAND OF PERHENTIAN, 20 MILES OFF THE UNDEVELOPED AND NOT EASILY ACCESSIBLE EAST COAST. EARLIER GROUPS OF CAMBODIANS AND VIETNAMESE WHO ARRIVED ABOARD SEAWORTHY CRAFT HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED TO PROCEED ELSEWHERE, PRINCIPALLY SINGAPORE OR AS IN THE CASE OF THE CAMBODIANS, THE PILIPPINES BY WAY OF SABAH. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 257 OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS FOR FRANCE. FRANCE, WHICH HAS MOVED FRUSTRATINGLY SLOW IN COMPARISON WITH ITS MISSIONS IN OTHER AREAS IN ASIA, HAS MOVED 17 VIETNAMESE AND 20 CAMBODIANS. THUS FAR 398 HAVE DEPARTED FOR THE U.S. IN TWO INCREMENTS. CONFIDENTIAL

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AN ADDITIONAL 296 VIETNAMESE ARE CURRENTLY SCHEDULED TO DEPART FOR THE U.S. ON AN ICEM DC-10 CHARTER FLIGHT ON AUGUST 8. THIS FLIGHT BEING HELD PENDING UNTIL TEAM COMPLETES VISIT TO SINGAPORE. THIS WILL LEAVE A BALANCE OF 294.

8. AUSTRALIA HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO TAKE 100 WITHOUT REGARD TO CRITERIA IN ADDITION TO 150 FROM SINGAPORE. CANADA IS BELIEVED PREPARED TO TAKE ABOUT 50. GERMANY

WILL TAKE 18 NEXT WEEK AND 2 VIETNAMESE HAVE GONE TO BELGIUM. OF THE TOTAL GROUP OF REFUGEES ON PERHENTIAN, THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT 23 VIETNAMESE RETURNED TO VIETNAM ABOARD FISHING CRAFT WHICH WILL LEAVE AN EXPECTED RESIDUAL OF 74 REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA.

9. THE GOM ITSELF, WITHOUT FANFARE, HAS ACCEPTED 1200 MOSLEM CAMBODIAN CHAMS MOST OF WHOM HAVE COME BY BUS AND TRUCK ACROSS THAILAND. THE EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE MALAYSIANS WITH THEIR OWN SEVERE COMMUNAL PROBLEMS WILL AGREE TO TAKE ANY VIETNAMESE. THE EMBASSY HAS STATED IN STRONGEST TERMS ITS BELIEF THAT THE U.S. SHOULD TAKE THE 296 NOW CONTRACTED FOR WITH ICEM IN ADDITION TO PERHAPS A SMALL ADDITIONAL PERCENTAGE OF THE 74 TO ENCOURAGE OTHER MISSIONS TO DO THE SAME.

10. CLEARLY THE MOST IMPORTANT EFFORT REMAINS WITH THE FRENCH GOVT. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HERE, FRANCOIS DE QUIRIELLE, HAS MOVED MADDENINGLY SLOWLY. PRIOR TO HIS ASSIGNMENT HE HAS SERVED IN NVN FROM 1966 TO 1969 BOTH AS DELAGATE GENERAL AND DELEGATE. EMBASSY REPORTS THAT THE FRENCH MISSION IS QUITE CLOSE TO THE SOVIET AND CHINESE MISSIONS.

11. IN TAKING APPLICATIONS, THE FRENCH EMBASSY HAS MADE THREE CLASSIFICATIONS, THOSE WITH RELATIVES AND SPONSORS; THOSE WITHOUT CONNECTIONS OR ONLY VAGUE CONNECTIONS; AND THOSE WITH A WISH TO GO TO NEW CALEDONIA. DURING THE TEAM'S CONSULTATIONS AUG 1, IT WAS LEARNED THAT PARIS HAD INFORMED ICEM THAT 40-50 APPLICATIONS OF THE 257 WERE BEING "FAVORABLY" CONSIDERED. TEAM HAS STRESSED TO THE EMBASSY NEED TO COORDINATE NAME LISTS TO MAKE SURE THAT NO APPLICANTS FOR THIRD COUNTRIES ARE PLACED ON U.S. LISTS.

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12. CAMP CONDITIONS: DURING COURSE OF VISIT OF TEAM TO SEE REFUGEES TRANSITING KUALA LUMPUR AIRPORT, TEAM LEADER HAD CONVERSATION WITH CHAIRMAN OF MALAYSIAN RED CROSS BURHANUDDIN. CAMP CONDITIONS AS REPORTED BY BURHANUDDIN MOST ENCOURAGING, AND FAR BETTER THAN FEARED BASED ON IMPRESSION IN WASHINGTON. RED CROSS WITH OTHER VOLUNTEER AND UNHCR FINANCIAL BACKING IS ACTIVE ON THE ISLAND. REFUGEES ARE IN TENTS, TWO FAMILIES PER TENT. THEY RECEIVE THREE MEALS PER DAY WHICH INCLUDE FRUIT, VEGETABLES AND MILK. ISLAND ITSELF AN APPARENT TROPICAL PARADISE WHERE BURHANUDDIN HIMSELF VACATIONS. ONLY MEDICAL PROBLEMS THOSE ONE WOULD EXPECT, SOME SKIN DISEASE AND RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS. REFUGEES ARE RECEIVING FULL HEALTH SCREENING INCLUDING X-RAY EMBASSY BENEFITED EARLIER FROM VISIT OF U.S. DOCTOR FROM INDONESIA AND HAVE IN FACT BEEN APPLYING STRICTER MEDICAL

PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA THAN CALLED FOR BY IATF GUIDANCE.
IMPRESSION IN WASHINGTON CONCERNING HEALTH CONDITIONS
APPARENTLY A HANG-OVER FROM INITIAL PERIOD WHEN PICTURE
WAS WORSE.
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